

Nation



Supporting the shelter

Coming Home Part 2

A New Voice

Comfort and Care

\$2.50

Canada Post Publication No. 40015005

Free in Eeyou Istchee
Serving Eeyou Istchee since 1993

AVAILABLE NOW!



CONTENTS



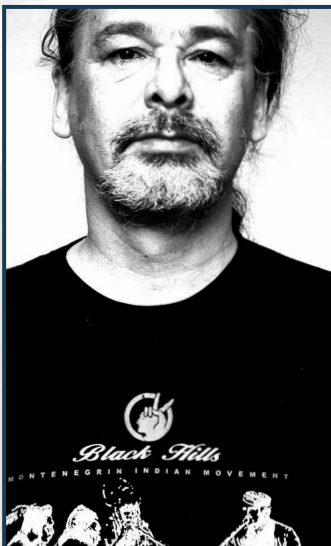
5 | The spillway



6 | Historic agreement



10 | Burlesque for a cause



14 | Neil's travels II



18 | A rising star



23 | Medical team at Espresso hotel

EDITORIAL

Helping hands 4

NEWS

The changing ice 5

A bigger share 6

IN BRIEF

9

FEATURES

Decolonizing sexuality 10

The wall 14

A new voice 18

Long-term comfort 23

REZ NOTES

Summer bodies 25

UTNS

Facing the storm 26



Lou Lou la Duchesse de Rièr
Photo by
Heather Waldron



Recently a young 16-year-old from Uganda, Kahoza Joas, sent me a Facebook friend request. Intrigued, I accepted.

The story he told during our online conversations brought back memories of my youth in Mistissini and Moose Factory. He talked of poverty and the indifference of political leaders towards the poor in his country. The Cree of my generation and earlier know what he was talking about. No electricity, no running water, no indoor plumbing, police arriving to take the children to residential school and arresting people while doing searches without a warrant. Not to mention the lack of concern among politicians for our situation and rights.

No matter how poor we seemed, people always shared. One of my friends and cousins was Herbie, one of the many sons of Steady Eddie Matoush. There were a lot of kids in that family but if I was around during a meal time I would always be given a plate or bowl. When big game was taken or a lot of fish were caught the food was shared throughout the community. If a parent or relative was sick, there was always someone on hand to help.

I know what that was like, having lived with my grandfather in his later years. I am not the only one. It's all part of the Cree way of life.

That's why Kahoza made an impression on me. Back in 2014, when he was only 13, he had to quit school to take care of his mother, who was suffering from cancer. Being poor, he couldn't care for her and attend school.



Steady Eddie Matoush with his family

This young man though was still trying to learn as best he could. He asked me many questions about Canada from snow, fog, wheat, fishing and more. He wanted to verify what he had been told and to understand it. I suggested using the internet and online high-school equivalency courses. Unfortunately, all he had was a crappy cellphone, so I said I would see what I could do. I had a lot of responses and with the assistance of Neil Diamond, we found a Samsung Chrome notebook. It's designed just for the internet but that is all Kahoza needs for the moment.

It's not much to people in Canada these days but for someone like Kahoza

it's an opportunity and a chance at making his dreams of an education come true. Now it's up to him to make it happen just as it is for everyone else. We all should have chances in this world to make dreams come true.

That is true whether you are a Cree or from another culture or country. For me it was extending a part of the Cree way of life to beyond the borders of Eeyou Istchee to someone who had the same values all Cree embrace. While we should make sure that all Cree have these types of chances in life occasionally it feels good to help a person such as Kahoza.

the Nation is published every two weeks by Beesum Communications. EDITORIAL BOARD L. Stewart, W. Nicholls, M. Siberok, Mr. N. Diamond, E. Webb EDITOR IN CHIEF Will Nicholls DIRECTOR OF FINANCES Linda Ludwick EDITORS Lyle Stewart, Martin Siberok PRODUCTION AND SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR Dan Isaac CONTRIBUTING WRITERS E. Mianscum, X. Kataquapit, D. Isaac, A. German, N. Bertrand, P. Quinn, M. Siberok, Ndiamon DESIGN Matthew Dessner SALES AND ADVERTISING Danielle Valade, Wendall Gull, M. Juliette THANKS TO: Air Creebec

CONTACT US: The Nation, 4529 CLARK, #403, Montreal, QC, H2T 2T3 EDITORIAL & ADS: Tel.: 514-272-3077, Fax: 514-278-9914 HEAD OFFICE: P.O. Box 151, Chisasibi, QC. J0M 1E0 www.nationnews.ca EDITORIAL: nation@nationnews.ca news@nationnews.ca ADS: Danielle Valade: ads@nationnews.ca Wendall Gull: wendall@nationnews.ca SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$60 plus taxes, US: \$90, Abroad: \$110, Payable to beesum communications, all rights reserved, publication mail #40015005, issn #1206-2642 The Nation is a member of: The James Bay Cree Communications Society, Circle Of Aboriginal Controlled Publishers, Magazines Canada Quebec Community Newspaper Assn. Canadian Newspapers Assn. Les Hebdomadaires Du Québec. Funded [in part] by the Government of Canada. | www.nationnews.ca | facebook.com/NATIONnewsmagazine | Twitter: @creation_news



The changing ice

by Dan Isaac
Photo by Ian Diamond

Spillway opened in Eastmain not a cause for major concern, climate change might be

While the image associated to the opening of the spillway is that of a tidal wave, Francis Labbé, media spokesperson for Hydro-Québec, assured the increased water flow will be comparable to a spring run-off following a winter with heavy snowfall.

On May 8, Hydro-Québec opened their Eastmain-1 spillway, gradually increasing the flow rate of the Eastmain River by 1300 cubic metres per second over the course of 33 days until June 10.

Between June 10-30 the spilling will be reduced as much as possible to ensure the adjoining fishway isn't affected.

But according to Ivan Gilpin, Public Safety Director of Eastmain, the increase in water current isn't cause for major concern.

"Whenever there's an increase in water flow, we're always more concerned for visitors to the area," said Gilpin. "Our people are used to this kind of thing and know the areas to avoid."

The reason for opening of the spillway, as opposed to just the typical spring run-off, is due in part to a particularly snowy winter. According to Labbé, this year saw 20-55% more snow than recent years and there was also a lower demand for electricity than what Hydro had initially expected.

"We cannot produce electricity that won't be consumed," said Labbé. "So

sometimes we have to shut down turbines and let the water go elsewhere in order to lower the reservoir."

And while Labbé believes the demand for electricity will go up once a contract between Hydro-Québec and the state of Massachusetts is finalized, climate change is becoming a concern.

"We know that our previous models to predict weather conditions aren't as reliable as they used to be," cautioned Labbé. "Rain, as opposed to snow, is falling longer into the fall in the region, which is affecting our reservoirs."

This past rainy season, followed by heavier snow, has caused Hydro to consider the opening of a spillway that has stayed closed since 1985. The spillway near Kuujuaq might be opened between mid-June and August.

The last time that particular spillway was opened, flooding occurred and an estimated 10,000 caribou drowned. But Labbé says waters in the area will only rise by about 10-50 centimetres (0.32-1.6 ft) if the dam is opened.

On May 8, the annual spring run-off began near Waskaganish affecting the Rupert River.

"Of course, Mother Nature can be dangerous," said Ryan Erless, Director of Community Services in Waskaganish. "But we have Elders informing the young people and bush radio to inform the hunters and land users. Crees are really cautious, especially after the diversion."

Currently all travel over the ice has ceased in Waskaganish, but at this time of year that wasn't always the case.

"Most people follow the school calendar for Goose Break, meaning that people would cross the river to get their kids back to school when the ice had started to melt," said Erless.

"There was one instance back in the 1980s where a family was crossing the river to get home from Goose Break. The ice was already pretty thin and a bunch of people were forced to watch on in horror as this family tried to get their children home for their education."

Luckily, the family made it across, but it was a wake-up call to the community. Since then there's been a service partially subsidized by the Niskamoon Corporation that taxis families across the river by helicopter when the ice becomes unsafe. There's also a traditional ice monitoring program.

According to a representative from the Alma-based company Panorama Helicopters, they flew around 150 hours over the course of two weeks – a comparable total to previous years.

In closing, Erless passed along an ominous observation from the traditional ice monitoring program. "The Elders say the ice looks different now," he said. "Listening to their stories and then looking at the ice, you realize we don't have the same kind of ice they describe in their stories."

A bigger share

by Patrick Quinn

Historic agreements were reached between the Ontario government and First Nations partners on May 3 that will see mining and forestry revenues shared with the communities on whose lands these activities take place.

The agreements to share stumpage fees and mining royalties are the first of their kind in the province, signifying important progress in Ontario's commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

"Resource sharing is something that First Nations communities have been arguing for since we signed treaties and before that," Jason Batise, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council, told the Nation.

"I'm really pleased that Ontario and our First Nations have managed to strike a deal that is so significant in terms of the sharing that you can honestly say that there is a real reconciliation going on in Ontario."

Agreements were made with 32 First Nations who are members of partner organizations Grand Council Treaty #3, Wabun Tribal Council and Mushkegowuk Council.

The province has committed to sharing 45% of government revenues from forestry stumpage, and 40% of annual mining tax and royalties from active mines at the time of signing. For future mines in the areas covered by the agreements, 45% of revenues will flow to the First Nations partners.

"Resource revenue sharing provides a sustained source of funding for First Nations that will be directed towards local community priorities," said

Michael Gravelle, Minister of Northern Development and Mines. He suggested that these agreements will provide a framework for future deals with other First Nations.

The First Nations will have full control of allocating these funds into key initiatives that support economic development, education, health, community and cultural priorities. Internal discussions about equitable distribution within the communities are still in the preliminary stages.

Jason Gauthier, Chief of Missanabie Cree First Nation, was lead negotiator for Mushkegowuk Council. He had been invited to negotiations by Gravelle and Nathalie Des Rosiers, the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, who were eager to complete an agreement prior to the upcoming provincial election on June 7.

"I think fundamentally you start a relationship with being honest with the government, recognizing what has happened to us over the last 100 years or even longer, even since contact," said Gauthier. "I think we start from that place but we need to get past that quickly if we're to be able to properly and respectfully negotiate something."

With a clear timeline for reaching an agreement, meetings were more frequent in the early stages to establish principles of sharing and ensure that

goals were achieved within the nine months before the election. Gauthier credits great teams on both sides of the table for the successful outcome.

News of the agreements has been greeted enthusiastically by the participating communities, and is seen by many as long overdue.

"For far too long, we have seen resources extracted from our territory with no benefits except the IBAs (Impact and Benefit Agreements) with the resource sector," said Mushkegowuk Grand Chief Jonathan Solomon. He added that the agreements are "a right step in the right direction."

Canada's immense wealth of natural resources has always been a significant source of its economic prosperity. However, the failure to adequately compensate First Nations communities for resource development on their lands has resulted in numerous conflicts over the years.

Some progress has been made more recently, with several corporations developing individual agreements with communities. For example, BlackRock Metals signed an agreement with Oujé-Bougoumou in 2013 that guarantees income to the community linked to its project's profitability in addition to training, education, employment and business opportunities.

Historic agreement between Ontario and First Nations to share resource revenues

Companies have argued, however, that they shouldn't bear full responsibility for making deals with First Nations communities work. Sharing resource revenues enables governments to finally meet their treaty, legal, constitutional and moral obligations to Canada's First Nations peoples.

As a result of decades of activism, the country's Indigenous peoples now have unprecedented power and authority to participate in what happens on their territories, including sharing revenues from mining and forestry.

Chief Gauthier represents a growing willingness within communities to grasp opportunities that balance economic sustainability with community well-being – "anything that's going to give the First Nations a hand up and not a handout," as he calls it.

He anticipates that there will remain challenges with some companies that will interpret these agreements as "an out" to not fully negotiate with the communities. "I think that there needs to be some declaration made by the government that there's a way of doing business with First Nations and it has to continue to be fair," he said.

Gauthier also believes that every community should establish protocols that clarify how resource development will occur before companies first enter their territories.

The agreements don't change the First Nations' continuing ability to create resource development deals with industry, or the necessity for obtaining community consent and meeting regulatory requirements.

"We were clear on that," said Batise. "We wouldn't sign away our authority to go in and talk with

mining companies about partnering with them on another level.

"The Wabun Tribal Council communities are smack-dab in the world's largest gold camp," he continued. "The forests have been utilized around our neck of the woods for 100 years. Our agreement does not make it easier for those things to happen, that's an absolute fact. But maybe this does open up a better way for our communities to talk to the newcomers about how we work together when they're contemplating new mines or mills."

Batise envisions this revenue will support postsecondary education, housing initiatives, healthcare centres and other "capital projects that have been on the backburner for so many years." In the longer term, he can foresee communities investing some of the money in the larger economy to create wealth for future generations.

As communities become somewhat more prosperous, Batise also wants to see processes created that ensure transparency regarding how they're using the money. He's quick to acknowledge that many challenges lie ahead but that this is a big first step.

"If you were to think about what communities might have wanted in a revenue sharing deal, 50/50 would have been nice but we're almost at 50/50. It's that close, like if you said to your neighbour that we're sharing the fence. We're really pleased – it's a good deal."

"The forests have been utilized around our neck of the woods for 100 years. Our agreement does not make it easier for those things to happen, that's an absolute fact"

- Jason Batise, Executive Director of Wabun Tribal Council

Record Suspension Program

You can apply for a record suspension (pardon) to have your criminal record sealed, which can help you to get a job

You may be eligible if you:

- Were convicted of a criminal offence
- Have completed all the requirements of your sentence and probation
- You have completed the 5 or 10 year waiting period, depending on the nature of the offence

If you are a Cree beneficiary, the Cree Nation Government (CNG) can help you to fill out the record suspension application and if you qualify for financial assistance, the CNG may pay the costs associated with the application.

Need Help on How to Apply?

Contact your Local Community Reintegration Officer:

Chisasibi:	819-855-2120
Eastmain:	819-977-2400
Mistissini:	418-923-2661
Nemaska:	819-673-2400
Ouje-bougoumou:	418-745-2260
Waskaganish:	819-895-2126
Waswanipi:	819-753-2770
Wemindji:	819-978-3300
Whapmagoostui:	819-929-3796

If you have any additional questions or need more information, please contact the Correctional Services Regional Office in Val-d'Or at 819-874-2600 or by email at justice.valdor@cngov.ca

www.creejustice.ca

Commission d'enquête
sur les relations
entre les Autochtones
et certains
services publics

Québec

**Public hearings will
be held in the Cree Nation
of Mistissini in June.**

Where : Neoskweskau Complex (gymnasium)
When : June 11-20, 2018

You have experienced or witnessed an event of physical or verbal violence, discrimination, different treatment or even racism involving one of these six public services?

- Police Services
- Correctional Services
- Justice Services
- Health Services
- Social Services
- Youth Protection Services

**You would like to participate
to the public hearings?
Please communicate with us now.**

www.cerp.gouv.qc.ca
info@cerp.gouv.qc.ca
toll free : 1 844 580-0113
f @cerpQc

Your story **must**
be heard!

NOW ON SALE IN RADISSON

THE ULTIMATE POWER PAIR



Putting power together with reliable and expandable parallel connectivity.

- ✓ **Expandable Parallel Connectivity**
Together power up to 4,000 watts
 - ✓ **Reliable Portable Power**
More versatile and easy storage
 - ✓ **Quiet High Quality Performance**
Power sensitive electronics



HONDA
Power
Equipment
honda.ca

Distribué par: ALJA
819 638-7363 bureau | 819 638-9123 cell.

*Optional parallel operation cable (part number: 08E93-HPK-123H) required for parallel connectivity. Maximum continuous output in parallel operation is 3200 watts or 26.7 amps @ 120 VAC. For optimal performance and safety, always read and understand your owner's manual carefully and perform a pre-operation inspection before operating your Honda Power Equipment. Never run a generator in an enclosed or even partially enclosed area. Generator exhaust contains odorous, poisonous carbon monoxide gas that can cause unconsciousness or death. Prior to operating your Honda Generator check your equipment or appliance for actual voltage requirements. Models and colours may not be exactly as shown. For full details and safety information visit honda.ca.

Paving the way

Credited as the first Indigenous hockey player to play in the NHL, Fred Sasakamoose was honoured with the Order of Canada May 10. A residential school survivor, Sasakamoose hails from the Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation, and played in 11 NHL games for the Chicago Black Hawks in 1953-54 followed by an illustrious career in the minors.

After retiring from the game in 1966, Sasakamoose went on to help youngsters across his home province of Saskatchewan develop their skills for the game. In his acceptance of the honour the 84-year-old encouraged Indigenous children to strive in sport and aim for the Olympics.



Lyme on the rise

While the Canadian government is highlighting areas far from Eeyou Istchee, Lyme disease, which is spread by ticks, is universally on the rise. If you find yourself feeling flu-like symptoms in the middle of summer, it may be worthwhile to get tested.

The full list of early symptoms include a rash (sometimes shaped like a bull's eye), fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes.

Left untreated, more symptoms will develop such as severe headaches, additional skin rashes, facial paralysis (i.e. Bell's palsy); intermit-

tent muscle, joint, tendon and bone aches; heart palpitations; neurological disorders like dizziness, mental confusion or inability to think clearly, and memory loss; inflammation of the brain and spinal cord, nerve pain, numbness or tingling in the hands as well as severe joint pain similar to arthritis.

And while the effects of long-term exposure to Lyme disease can seem overwhelming, early detection and treatment is key. According to the Government of Canada's webpage: "Most cases of Lyme disease can be effectively treated with two to four weeks of antibiotics."

The **holey** road

It's astonishing something worse hasn't happened say some who've recently driven the James Bay Highway. Two drivers shared their harrowing tales of this stretch of road with the CBC and some are saying that it's been this bad for decades.

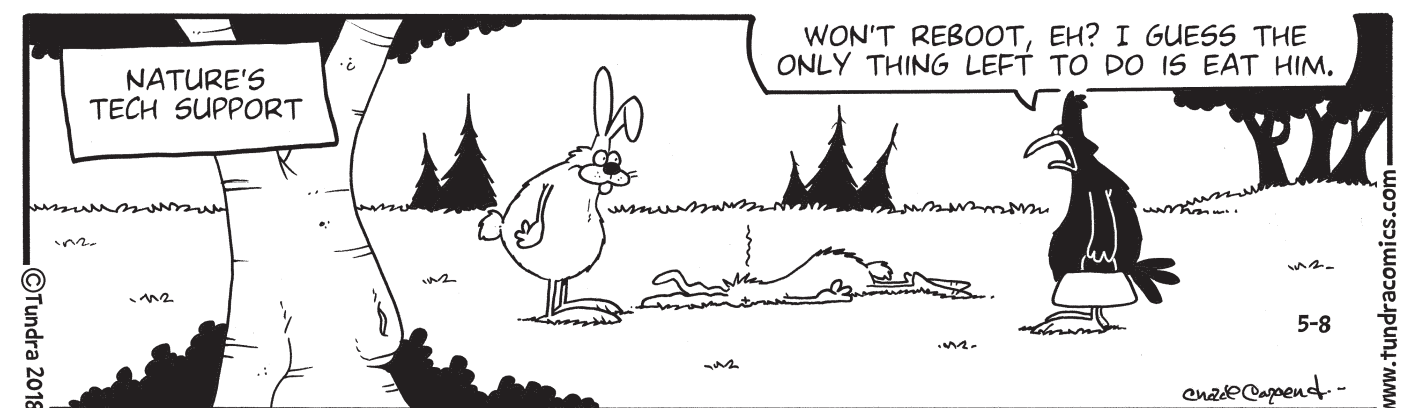
In its early days it was meant for heavy duty vehicles, those mak-

ing the trip for the hydro-electric program, mining and forestry. Now families from the Cree communities drive it south to places like Matagami, Val-d'Or, Amos, Rouyn-Noranda and Montreal, but no one has ever given the road high marks.

One of the drivers who spoke with the CBC reported an air-bag

deployment after hitting a pothole, while the other driver lost two tires on the trip. Clearly, something needs to be done before a major accident happens.

Plans to repave the highway are currently in works between now and 2021. Until then, drive with caution.





decolonizing sexuality

by Nahka Bertrand
Photos by Heather Waldron

Burlesque community comes together in **support of MMIWG**

The Montreal burlesque community came together for a colourful evening of erotic dance, featuring an entirely Indigenous line-up, on May 4. The event was a fundraiser for the Iskweu project, which aims to offer harm reduction practices and a safe space for Indigenous women working in the city's sex industry.

"It's definitely a different kind of event for supporting the shelter," said Jessica Quijano with a laugh. Quijano heads the Iskweu Project, a branch of the Montreal Urban Aboriginal Strategy Network's Justice Committee that collaborates with the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal (NWSM).

The Iskweu project supports families and victims of women who have disappeared or were murdered in or around Montreal.

Quijano's work includes establishing a network of people and organizations focused on helping sex workers and people in situations of homelessness, following up with police reports, and offering support and referrals to clients.

Quijano explained that most of the women who are at risk of disappearing or being murdered are active in the sex industry, and because of the NWSM's policies on abstinence from drugs and alcohol, these women sometimes have no place to turn to if they're in need.

Further complicating things for the city's most vulnerable, The Open Door, a resource centre for homeless people and sex workers near Cabot Square, is moving across town to Milton Park. This leaves a gap in services offered for those who access the Open Door regularly.

"We're focusing more on prevention when we're looking at the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls," Quijano said. She went



Quijano stressed the importance of moving towards the decriminalization of sex work, and fostering sex-positive attitude



on to explain that the money raised at the burlesque event would go towards alternative sources of harm reduction for sex workers.

Examples of what this could look like includes hiring an outreach worker for evening shifts, since violence most often happens in the evening or at night, or renting a hotel room where sex workers can go to either see a nurse or talk to someone they trust. The goal is to eventually raise enough funds to open a 24-hour crisis centre that is street-based and where women can go to get help, even if they're under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

After connecting with Quijano, Indigenous burlesque dancer Lou Lou la Duchesse de Rière found herself very much on board for a fundraising event, and she co-produced the show with Sugar Vixen, who is also Indigenous.

The event took place at the Wiggle Room on St. Laurent Boulevard – the country's only cabaret space offering a burlesque show six nights of the week. The event was realized in the context of the Wiggle Room's Feel Good Fridays, a charity happening that takes place once a month. Lou Lou la Duchesse de Rière both hosted and performed, and she collaborated with Sugar Vixen to organize the all-Indigenous line-up, which included dancers from all over the Eastern Door.

Harlow Holiday made the four-and-half-hour drive from Syracuse, New York, to perform at the event. "Personally, it's huge for me. I came for the cause, the opportunity, not to mention sharing the stage with these powerhouses. I feel pretty awesome!" Harlow Holiday said after the event.

Holiday explained that burlesque has a positive transformative power for her, and that it's especially significant in the context of colonial history and the impact that it's had on Indigenous people.

"Residential schools made space for body-shaming the Indigenous woman. It's okay for a Native woman to show her body, because it's her body," said Holiday.

For Lou Lou la Duchesse de Rière, burlesque creates a conversation that decolonizes Indigenous women's sexuality, especially in reference to trauma, rape and murder. Lou Lou la Duchesse de Rière has been working as a performer for over 10 years, and often travels for work.

"Our mandate is to educate," she told the Nation. "Because sex work, it's happened, it's happening, and some sex workers have really dangerous working conditions. Sexual empowerment is a strong tool, and burlesque, well, it's healthy, it's fun, and it's safe."

Quijano stressed the importance of moving towards the decriminalization of sex work, and fostering sex-positive attitudes, especially towards Indigenous women. In the sex industry, Quijano clarified, "Indigenous women are seen as disposable, and some people think they deserve it, like they were asking for it. There's a lot of stigma."

Quijano was enthused by the performance, and happy with the turnout. The event raised over \$1200.

Sex work, it's happened, it's happening, and some sex workers have really dangerous working conditions. Sexual empowerment is a strong tool, and burlesque, well, it's healthy, it's fun, and it's safe.

- Lou Lou la Duchesse de Rière



Travels and travails of Neil's meandering journey through the Balkans

THE WALL

Part 2 of Neil Diamond's most excellent international adventure
Story & Photos by NDiamon

Even before ending up in Montenegro, I had been planning to write a travel book. I thought I had what I believed was a very clever title – *Around the World in 800 Days: An Unexpurgated Account of the Travels and Travails of a Cree Gentleman*.

To accomplish the task, I would have had to circumnavigate the globe in two years and 19 days.

So when I arrived in Montenegro in September 2011, and had I stayed only for the seven days that were budgeted for – instead of seven years – I would have had to get myself to Kathmandu, Nepal, where Reel Injun was to be screening, then fly off to South Korea or China, across the Pacific to North America and finally home to Waskaganish.

I had been close to the top of the world in Igloolik, Nunavut, and near the bottom in Aotearoa – better known as New Zealand. But it wasn't to be. Unlike Phileas Fogg in his 80-day journey, my hot-air balloon lost its buoyancy over the mountains of Montenegro.

As John Lennon once said, "Life is what happens to you when you're busy making other plans."

So I hit a wall in Montenegro and, in fact, this tiny republic by the Adriatic Sea is literally surrounded by a wall of moun-

tains. It's a natural fortress. Driving from Macedonia through Kosovo, you can see the line of high peaks for miles.

Perhaps that is why, for over 400 years, Crna Gora (as Montenegrins call their country) remained independent from the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires. The people from there are renowned warriors who were able to fend off hordes of janissaries, the elite Ottoman warriors. They were at one point called the "Indians" of the Balkans. But ours is not a story of old battles won and lost.

We entered Nikši at night. A conference dinner was being held near my hotel. The restaurant, Portun, was packed. I was greeted and introduced by my Croatian professor friend Sanja Runtic, who helped arrange my visit.

Also present was Craig Womack, a Creek-Cherokee novelist and a Native American literature professor at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. Womack had been invited by the University of Montenegro to deliver lectures on Native American writers. The students seemed shy and wouldn't ask questions after Womack's talk. I don't know if they were stunned to find out that Indians had been writing books not that long after contact. Nonetheless, they were spellbound watching a real Cherokee Indian actually lecturing.

Several universities in the Balkans now offer courses on Native American literature. Scholars, artists, writers and poets from Oklahoma, California and elsewhere passed



through during my time there. One of them was Timothy Petete from the Seminole Nation and a professor at the University of Central Oklahoma who lectures on New Media. Petete has traveled the region for just over four years now introducing contemporary Native artists, musicians and writers to a new audience.

Another recent visitor was renowned performance artist James Luna from the La Jolla Indian Reservation in California. James gave a performance at the city's cultural centre, and lectured in the capital, Podgorica. On his last few nights, he performed at the Blues Brothers Bar playing his songs with a local blues guitarist. Sadly, Luna died of a heart attack in New Orleans last March. One of his works is still displayed on the walls of the tiny nightclub he performed at in Nikši.

Another conference is taking place this summer in Montenegro. Two of my friends, one a Lakota professor from Missoula, Montana, the other a PhD candidate from Los Angeles, are probably packing their bags ready to travel across the ocean to bring wisdom.

Bear with me now, this is a travel story without travel, and we have yet to reach our destination.

When Womack and I first visited, we were given a tour of the old royal capital, Cetinje, high up in the mountains. The local monastery's museum, filled with icons of silver, gold and wood, was a highlight. It was a small exhibit that took no longer than half an hour to explore but when we wanted to leave we found ourselves locked in. We sat by the door for almost two hours singing "Hotel California" for a captive audience.

Something I wanted to see was a gate to one of the important buildings in the town that had been constructed from captured Ottoman rifles. Unfortunately, the gate had been removed when diplomatic relations with Turkey were established after the First World War.

Several days later I went up Mount Lov en, just outside the old capital. At its summit is a granite mausoleum, in which lies Montenegro's greatest poet, philosopher, lover, Prince Bishop and warrior priest – Petar II Petrovi -Njegoš. From the summit, it is said that on a clear, cold day, you can see the boot of Italy clear across the Adriatic.

Montenegro is not a wealthy country. After the breakup of Yugoslavia and the Western sanctions that followed, the economy suffered greatly. Still today, the unemployment rate is a whopping 37%. Walking along the main pedestrian street you see cafés filled with men and women nursing their coffees and idly chatting. During the period after the NATO bombings of the last remnants of Yugoslavia in 1999, jobs began to disappear, factories closed and the smuggling of cars, oil, tobacco and drugs skyrocketed. Hey, people will do anything to survive. Enter the Pink Panthers...

The Pink Panthers are a group of international jewel thieves. They earned the name when they used the same trick in smuggling diamonds in a jar of cream as in the Peter Sellers comedy. No one knows for sure but many suspect they first came together in Cetinje.

The gang consists of Montenegrins, Serbs and Albanians with a mysterious leader. They are known for daring daylight robberies of jewelry stores in Western Europe, Japan and the Middle East. During one of their best-known capers in the Arab world, they dressed themselves in burqas and stole several hundred thousand dollars worth of diamonds.

To this day, they are believed to have stolen half a billion dollars worth of jewelry. Part of their Robin Hood image in the Balkans is due to the fact that they have never killed anyone during a robbery. There was talk several years ago that Leonardo DiCaprio was going to film their story with himself as the leader of the gang.

I was on my way home one day with a friend who shall remain nameless. As we passed this one café he turned to me and quietly said, "This is where some of them hang out."

After my official week in Montenegro back in 2011, it came to happen that I missed my return flight to Montreal. I contacted the airline for another ticket home, but discovered that my bank account was short by several hundred dollars that I would need to complete my journey.

John Lennon's phrase echoed in my head as I called my host. "Don't worry," I was told. "It's only money. We'll fix it."

I received another message moments later telling me that a conference was to take place in Nuremburg, Germany, and that a photographer would come to good use – all expenses paid.

"I'll do it," I gleefully replied.

Seven years later, I'm contemplating the idea of changing my book's title to *Around the World in 8000 Days*. You know the rest – 8000 days adds up to just over 21 years. More than enough time to write a book.

Maïté Labrecque-Saganash is making her presence felt. Whether she's busy being an activist, a journalist, a feminist, a student, a daughter or simply a member of the Waswanipi Cree Nation, she is determined to make her voice heard.

In francophone Quebec, Labrecque-Saganash has rapidly become a high-profile personality – largely thanks to her weekly column in *Métro*, the free Montreal daily newspaper. Identified as a “*Militante crie et étudiante en science politique*” (Cree activist and political-science student), she has been writing about Indigenous issues since October 2016.

That same year she toured Quebec for a project called *Faut qu'on se parle* (We Need To Talk) that included former student leader Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois (now the co-leader of Québec solidaire) and Jean-Martin Aussant (the former leader of Option nationale). Engaging with people either in large public forums or during intimate home visits, they discussed political and social issues with the goal of defining the kind of Quebec that Quebecers want and how socially progressive it should be.

Now Labrecque-Saganash is a familiar voice on television and radio talk shows and is frequently invited to speak at various conferences.

During the *Faut qu'on se parle* tour, Labrecque-Saganash was surprised at the welcome she received when she spoke about Indigenous peoples in Quebec: “I told them about our culture and how we view the land, the environment, the resources, and they were very moved and respectful. And when we addressed Quebec sovereignty and what role Indigenous people could play, I would turn the discussion around and ask what can Quebec do for Indigenous sovereignty.”

Born in 1995, Labrecque-Saganash grew up in the suburbs of Quebec City with her mother Elaine, her father – the NDP MP and former Cree negotiator Romeo Saganash – and two siblings, sister Stéphanie and brother Félix. In school, she said she experienced racism and was bullied for being Indigenous.

“Though there were some Black and Vietnamese students, we as Cree were treated harshly,” she recounted. “We had deal with a lot of stereotypes and disinformation. However, unlike the others, they couldn't tell us to ‘Go back to where we came from.’ We were already here.”

Labrecque-Saganash notes that many Québécois youth know little about Native people other than as what they see in their history books – “scantily dressed, prehistoric beings who have nothing to do with the Quebec reality.”

Several years ago, Labrecque-Saganash sat on an advisory committee that reviewed the new Quebec high-school history curriculum introduced in 2016. After a year, committee members were told that the editors weren't

obliged to use any of their recommendations. Upon hearing this, Labrecque-Saganash demanded a meeting with the editors.

“I spoke about residential schools in Quebec, and pointed out that during the Quiet Revolution [in the 1960s] when the Québécois were seeking emancipation, they were still forcing Native children into residential schools,” she said of the meeting. “When I finished, one editor replied that they all knew my father had attended a residential school, and understood that I was a bit emotional about the subject. I told them it had nothing to do with emotion, but with

historical facts and these needed to be taught.”

Her father and his siblings were sent to residential schools, and Labrecque-Saganash said she deals with the legacy of this experience on a daily basis.

“When it comes to my dad, it's about his communication skills,” she said of Romeo. “It's hard for him to express his feelings, since he's not in touch with them, but he's learning. I'm about to turn 23 and we're just now figuring out how to communicate with each other.”

For the first four months of this year, Labrecque-Saganash traveled across Eeyou Istchee with the Footprints: A Walk Through Generations exhibit, which was curated by the Aanischaaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute in Oujé-Bougoumou. In every community, she met a number of

*“The province
has to realize that
when they destroy
the land **they are
destroying our
way of life, and
our language**”*

a new voice

A young Cree activist is becoming
a **Quebec media star**





Left; photo by Alexandre Claude Photographie & Video. Right; Maïtée during her time working on the Footprints: A Walk Through Generations traveling exhibit

I can't imagine how my grandmother feels looking at how different we live today

residential school survivors. Many talked with her openly about their experiences knowing that her father was a survivor. When she asked them if they ever spoke to their children about it, most said they didn't.

Labrecque-Saganash would see her father dealing with his pain as she grew up, but she never knew why. These days she understands much more and says her father's relationship with his children is changing. "I think seeing me reclaiming my culture and language, and my brother being an amazing hunter and fisherman, and good on the land, has made my dad more connected and closer to us. He realizes that he has passed on pride to us, rather than just trauma."

A political science student at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), Labrecque-Saganash is thinking about going on to get a law degree. But she decided to take the winter semester off in order to spend more time up north.

"I went to get more connected. I went to speak with the Elders, and my fellow youth to learn things and I did it on my own," she said. "Growing up I spent all my summers in the Broadback area until I was around 16. Then I stopped, but now I realize unconsciously I was missing it. These days I know that I need to go up

north to find balance. I'm so deeply attached to this land that I can't be away from it for too long."

For Labrecque-Saganash, the most important issue facing Indigenous peoples in Quebec is land. "Nearly 90% of Waswanipi's territory has been cut or fragmented. As an Indigenous person I should have the right to live and thrive on my land. It's alarming when you think that the youth will grow up hunting on clear-cut land. The province has to realize that when they destroy the land they are destroying our way of life, and our language," she stated.

"It is really traumatizing for the Elders. I can't imagine how my grandmother feels looking at how different we live today. While many Québécois see Hydro-Québec as such an accomplishment, they never think about what it cost the Cree to build those dams. I want to make sure that Quebec understands our place and role here, and doesn't take us for granted."

* * *

MAÏTÉE LABRECQUE-SAGANASH WILL BEGIN A NEW COLUMN FOR THE NATION IN THE COMING ISSUES.

WE CREATE
IDENTITIES



BRANDING | CORPORATE IDENTITY CREATION | BRAND GUIDELINES

514-272-3077 - melissa@beesum.com - www.beesum.com



ᐱᓂᕈᖃᐅᐁᑦ ᗵᒥᐅᐁᑦ ᐍ ᐠᑭᑲᑯᑦ (ᐁᙳ ᐘᙰ)
Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)
Grand Conseil des Cris (Eeyou Istchee)

ᐃᓕᑦ ᑎᐅᓂᑦᑲᑦ
Cree Nation Government
Gouvernement de la Nation Crie

Are you planning to buy or lease a new/used vehicle?

Need advice on financing and leasing options?

The Cree Nation Government is now providing a free vehicle brokerage service to ensure that Cree citizens or Cree entities are given the best price when buying or leasing new/used vehicles.

Our automotive agent can provide you with free tips, advice and assistance from your very first appointment at the car dealership until the final signing of your contract.

Service now available in Val-d'Or, Amos, Rouyn, La Sarre.

Cree Consumer Protection Automotive Agent

Yvon St-Pierre
Tel : (819) 856-3001
Email: yvon@courtierauto3001.ca

CREE TRANSLATORS WANTED!

• $\Delta \rho \approx 10^{-10}$

***FREELANCE POSITIONS
AVAILABLE NOW!***

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS
INTERESTED, PLEASE CALL US FOR
MORE INFORMATION!

Dialects desired:
Northern/Coastal Cree
Southern/Inland Cree
Swampy Cree
Woods Cree
& More!

514-272-3077 | translation@beesum.com | www.beesum.com

Long-term comfort

Cree Patient Services get beefed up at the Espresso

by Amy German | Photos provided by CHB

With the growing number of long-term patients, it was only a matter of time before the Espresso Hotel would provide more services for them.

According to the Espresso's new nurse, Meggie Carpel, having a nurse-and-doctor team on-site was something that

As some patients end up staying at the hotel for months at a time while they receive treatment for long-term illnesses, this medical team is

necessary. The team will be in contact with the hospital treatment team the patient is in Montreal to access.

"We want to make sure

facilities became necessary when patients were being transported back and forth for something as simple as a bandage change. Carpel said it is this type of care that patients can now just stop by the Espresso without the hassle. If it's something that can't be handled by the Espresso, the patient will be taken elsewhere for services.

The doctor that the CBHSSJB chose to join the team was Dr. David Dannenbaum, a longtime staff member who is well-known in the communities.

"It's amazing to see the relationship Dr. Dannenbaum has with our patients. They recognize him and hug him. There's an immediate trust because they know each other. He's been working up north for 20 years, and is aware of the reality of the northern life," said Carpel.

"He's been actively involved in developing this service and finding other medical doctors to participate."

had been in the works for a long time. She said the first step was getting the facility certified and then hiring a full-time nurse. The final step was to add a doctor to the team.

"Medical support is part of an ongoing process to add more services under Wiichihiituwinn (Cree Patient Services) to better serve our population," said Cappel.

geared towards supporting them. "Our primary goal is to provide medical support for long-term patients and their escorts. The services are available for everyone under Wiichihiituwinn care. The doctor is by appointment and the nurse is available for drop-in visits," explained Carpel.

Patients will have access to the nurse on week days and she will determine who needs to see the doctor when

that there's continuity in care with the services offered at Espresso and in Montreal, and also when our patients return to their community. We will communicate with the patient's CMC in their home community, in order to ensure proper follow-up," said Carpel.

While Montreal already has many hospitals, clinics and now super-clinics, the need to have in-house



If you are an Indigenous woman
of Eeyou Istchee and you feel that
you or anyone you know is in
danger, we are here to help you!

Piipiichaau Uchishtuun | Robin's Nest | Women's Shelter



For women and children of Eeyou Istchee
suffering from domestic violence
Toll Free Crisis Line Open 24/7
1-855-753-2094

www.creehealth.org/services/womens-shelters-robins-nest



Summer bodies

by Errol Mianscum

Well, now that winter is nearly done with, most of us can resume our strict diet and exercise routine that we all started one week into the New Year. This, of course, is day two of the diet.

Summer is fast approaching, and now we are in “panic mode” just because of what was supposed to be an early cheat day has turned into a cheat month (or two). Time to dust off our walking shoes (yes, running shoes for you others), pull out the matching exercise clothes from last year, plug in the exercise machine that is now used as a place to dry your laundry, stretch those muscles and get going.

We call up our close friends and everyone is anxious to start with their routines as well and get fit. We get out there, going all out, chest sticking out, taking in all that nice fresh air. We get home after a good hour of exercise and excitedly say, “We need to do this again tomorrow.” The exercise partner responds with an excited “Yes for sure, I’ll be here.”

Next day that text comes in saying that it “looks like rain”, you look outside and see only one cloud in the sky but find yourself agreeing with your exercise partner. Tomorrow, we’ll try again. North wind is too strong. Too many flies, not enough wind to blow them away. I just had supper. My exer-

cise clothes are still in the laundry..... Next year for sure.

We all have that desire to live that better, healthier life. But if you’re like me, the exercises are there but that diet sure isn’t going as planned. One day of healthy eating followed by six days of “cheat day”. I wonder if others are like that, why can’t we have that discipline when it comes to food – this poutine tastes too good to ignore; we have to have that goose with the gravy because you just can’t have it without; that small bite of dessert ends up with an empty plate. No, I seldom eat poutine or desserts but they do have their equal sinful delights as alternatives.

It sure is tough staying motivated throughout the year, let alone a week sometimes, but I for one have to keep pushing myself. But, a bigger challenge I am starting to notice is seeing my children not being as active as I’d like them to be. I make all these plans to do these activities but most are short lived – I don’t blame the laziness of my child, I blame my lack of focus. Have to stop asking if they want to go today

I raise my salad bowl and wish you
all a healthy and fun-filled summer

and start telling them it’s time to go. I know there are more parents out there who put every waking moment into their child’s physical health needs, be it academic, recreational or athletic camps – these are perfect ingredients to a child’s physical stability. Like every other parent, I learned to sacrifice more for our children. The important thing is making sure physical activity is ever-present in the household and just as important that mom and dad stay involved.

Yup, it sure would be nice to fit into those clothes a couple sizes smaller, run and not walk as an exercise, do those cardio exercises without having to take a break every minute and have that willpower to turn away from that “delicious” food.

I suppose we’ll see how this year turns out for us health enthusiasts. I raise my salad bowl and wish you all a healthy and fun-filled summer with family and friends.

Ha-ha, “salad bowl”, it’s barbecue season!



BRING IN SPRING EVENT

MEGA CENTRE Kubota

1885, 3e Avenue
Val-d’Or, Qc J9P 7B1
(819) 874-1138
megacentrekubota.com

0% FOR 60 MONTHS FINANCING OAC*

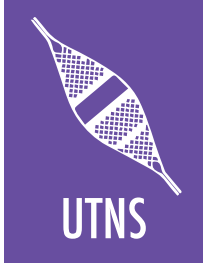
*See your dealer for details.

REACH OVER 100,000 CUSTOMERS EVERY MONTH

Advertise in the **Nation Magazine**

CONTACT INFORMATION

Danielle Valade
Tel: (514) 272-3077
Email: ads@nationnews.ca
www.nationnews.ca



Facing *Under the Northern Sky* the storm

by Xavier Kataquapit



We're coming out of a long, hard winter here in northern Ontario. Elders tell me that this winter is similar to what they experienced growing up decades ago. The snow came early to the north and right across most of Canada. It has also taken its time leaving and it seems that spring is a month behind schedule.

In many ways, the long winter was good for the Cree of James Bay, as the ice road held up better this year and everyone had more time to move around and out of towns along the coast in vehicles and snowmobiles. Regions in southern Canada and the US also experienced severe snowstorms and longer-than-usual winters. A lot of people concluded that this was proof that global warming is not a threat.

According to many scientists, however, these colder, longer and more violent winters are the result of global warming. Studies show that abnormally warm Arctic temperatures produce severe winters further south. Warmer temperatures in the Arctic cause the jet stream to swing south, sending cold air masses to regions that normally don't have harsh winter conditions. These same scientists predict that as global warming persists there will be more development of extreme winters that feature bomb cyclones and polar vortexes. These weather pattern changes produce very big storms and cold weather in areas where people are not accustomed to them.

Luckily, we in the north are already well prepared for winter weather with equipment, well-insulated buildings and

a long history of dealing with the cold and snow. However, as these weather patterns continue to change from the burning of fossil fuels that contribute to global warming, people in southern Canada and into the US may have to deal with harsh stormy winters that they are not prepared for. That happened several times during this past winter and could very well be the norm now in coming years. With right-wing governments in place to the south of us that continue to deny global warming things don't look very good at all.

Up the James Bay coast, the changes in weather are obvious. In the high Arctic there was warmer weather this year and that has an effect on the polar ice cap, the glaciers and in turn all of the animal life in the far north. The Elders I talk to say things are getting very confused and upside down. Some people even warn of the coming of another ice age. They also note that coastal areas throughout the world will be experiencing flooding leading up to this development.

Personally, I prefer to believe the majority of scientists and Elders who

are warning us about global warming over fossil-fuel proponents and right-wing political representatives who spend millions trying to convince us there is no problem.

Unfortunately, when I think about situations like this I realize that our earth and humanity must continue to struggle in a world where a very small group of super-rich billionaires control more than 50% of the planet's wealth. Most people on earth live in terrible conditions with no clean drinking water, poor housing and insufficient food. On top of that we continue to burn the fossil fuels that are threatening our very existence.

What hope do we have to turn around this reality of greed by few to the detriment of many? I don't have high hopes but I know one thing for sure: we should not be supporting right-wing governments that do the bidding of the very wealthy while everyone else suffers. Hopefully some day, we can start viewing our world through the eyes of all of its inhabitants rather than just the wealthy and powerful few.

MAKE EXTRA
CASH

We are looking for **Cree translators**.
If you are interested, please send us an
email: translation@beesum.com





WE AIM HIGHER !

**WE OFFER
DISCOUNTED
FARES ****



35 ANS
YEARS

airCreebec

FOR INFORMATION, RESERVATIONS OR CHARTERS

1-800-567-6567

W W W . A I R C R E E B E C . C A

***certain conditions may apply.*